

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7085

CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 1318

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH
SUBJECT: DEMOCRAT PARTY POSITION ON U.S. PRESENCE

REF: BANGKOK 1146

1. DR. KAMON SOMWICHIAN, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR
TECHNICAL AFFAIRS AND A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS ON JANUARY 20
THAT PUBLISHED STATEMENTS BY PARTY LEADER SENI PRAMOT
CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL U.S. MILITARY ADVISORS
(SEE REFTEL) ARE PRIMARILY FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION AND
DO NOT REFLECT REAL PARTY POLICY. HE POINTED OUT THAT
IN THE 1975 ELECTIONS THE DEMOCRATS CALLED FOR AN 18 MONTH
WITHDRAWAL, AND IT WAS KHUKRIT PRAMOT WHO LOWERED THIS TO
12 MONTHS. HE SAID THAT SENI AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS
FAVOR A CONTINUED SMALL U.S. PRESENCE, BUT FEEL THAT THEY
MUST PRE-EMPT OTHER PARTIES ON THIS ISSUE TO MAINTAIN
THE PARTY'S CREDIBILITY AMONG LIBERALS AS WELL AS TO
MOLLIFY THE LEFT-WING OF THE PARTY DURING THE CAMPAIGN.
HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD THE DEMOCRATS FORM A
COALITION WITH A PARTY WHICH DOES ADVOCATE TOTAL
U.S. WITHDRAWAL, THEY WOULD GIVE IN ON THE ISSUE.

2. COMMENT: KAMON HAS ATTENDED CORNELL, NYU,
AND COLUMBIA. HE WAS A LECTURER AT U.S. ARMY SCHOOL
OF LANGUAGES IN MONTERREY FOR TWO YEARS AND IS BY NO MEANS
UNFRIENDLY TO U.S. HOWEVER, AS BETWEEN PUBLIC POSITION
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STATED BY SENI (REFTEL) AND PRIVATE POSITION EXPRESSED

TO EMBASSY BY KAMON, WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT PUBLIC
POSITION WILL BE THE DOMINANT THEME IN ELECTITN CAMPAIGN
OF DEMOCRAT PARTY.
MASTERS

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